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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Extension Service

WARTIME PROBLEMS OF NEGRO 4-H CLUB WORK

Most difficult problems encountered in obtaining increases in Negro 4-H Club enrollment and in adjusting club programs to meet wartime needs in 1943. The most effective methods and devices used to meet these difficulties.

Compiled by

Erwin H. Shinn
Senior Agriculturist

Problems in conducting 4-H Club work among Negro farm youth have increased in number as well as in degree of difficulty during the war period. Frequent changes in local 4-H leadership due to wartime activities and the entrance of many farm youth into the combat service or into wartime jobs have been determining factors in the more challenging efforts made to increase the 4-H Club enrollment and in the carrying out of the club programs. Regardless of these handicaps, however, most of the States having Negro club work obtained increases in their enrollments in 1943 over 1942. The total increase for the 16 States was 37,178, or 17.1 percent. The total increase in the percentage of completions for 1943 over 1942 was 14.2 percent. These increases make a very creditable showing for Negro club work.

The success achieved in this direction is due to the extra effort on the part of Negro extension workers to make 4-H Club work function more effectively during wartime by means of better organization and more effective methods.

To get a clearer picture of the major problems Negro extension workers had encountered in increasing their 4-H Club enrollments and in carrying out 4-H Club programs, as well as the methods or devices they had used to meet difficulties in 1942 and 1943, a letter was sent to Negro extension leaders in 13 States asking for a list of (1) the major difficulties encountered and (2) the procedures found most effective in meeting these difficulties. Replies were received from 12 of the 13 States. With the thought that these statements might be helpful to Negro workers in all the States, a summary of the more important of these data has been prepared under two headings, as follows:

I. The most difficult problems encountered in increasing the 4-H Club enrollment and in adjusting programs to meet wartime needs:

1. Overloaded and inadequate personnel.
2. Lack of funds to do the job.
3. Personnel gaps in counties due to agents leaving the service.
4. Lack of trained rural leadership.
5. Diverted interest due to war and industry.
6. Lack of cooperation on part of parents.
7. Other members of the family entering defense jobs.
8. Locating available boys and girls.
9. Leadership assistance necessary to get the job done.
10. Supplying the incentive for participation.
11. Lack of time because of many wartime activities.

12. Labor situation - boys and girls doing other work.
13. Transportation conditions for agents.
14. Heavy drain of older club members into military and war work.
15. Manpower shortage and good wages have drawn many club members and potential club members out of reach of 4-H Club activities.
16. Limited and scattered local leadership.
17. Many club-age young people dropped out of school to work, and many already out of school obtained full-time jobs and did not have time to attend club meetings or to complete the club projects started by them.
18. Finding local leaders with enough spare time to encourage 4-H Club work.
19. Migration of families with 4-H members.
20. 4-H members leaving the rural communities to attend high school in cities and towns.
21. Older 4-H members taking on year-round jobs at high salaries.
22. The shifting of rural population, including the leadership.
23. Lack of time to make personal contact by county agents.
24. Lack of better-trained 4-H Club leaders.
25. To keep the general standard of 4-H Club work over the State up to prewar qualities in completion and enrollment.
26. To adjust subject matter and project reports to the level of the mass enrollment.
27. Obtaining an increase in 4-H Club enrollment owing to the short school terms and the great demand for boys' and girls' help on the farm on account of labor shortage.
28. The great need of a Negro State 4-H Club leader.
29. Inadequate salaries and travel expenses paid our home demonstration agents, thus curtailing their efforts.
30. Exodus of rural boys and girls to urban centers and military areas.
31. The small number of extension personnel.
32. Gasoline and tire rationing which cut down the number of meetings for giving out information.
33. Shortage of labor which makes us very much concerned about the number of meetings to be held.
34. Migration and the need for more agents.
35. Need for active, intelligent sponsors in each neighborhood.
36. Shifting of population.
37. Lack of time to devote to 4-H Club work because of extra wartime jobs which the agents have been called on to do.
38. Employment opportunities for young people have been grasped by many boys and girls of club age.
39. Transportation problems have made it difficult for club members to attend club meetings.

II. The most effective methods or devices used to meet these difficulties:

1. The neighborhood leadership system initiated into the extension organization has been carried into the 4-H Club activities.
2. Trained Victory captains to assist with 4-H neighborhood groups.
3. Conduct county recreational programs through district camps, picnics, etc.
4. Held rallies, conducted tours, and 4-H achievement programs.
5. Used the demonstration method of teaching, with special emphasis on letting boys and girls participate.
6. Planning by the farm and home agents for a better 4-H Club program in the county.
7. Training 4-H Club leaders, both adult and 4-H members.
8. Greater participation of 4-H Club members in the Feed-a-Fighter program.

9. Sponsors, both adults and older 4-H Club members, were urged to canvass the country side and find every boy and girl available for club work; then encourage them to enroll in 4-H production projects as Feed-a-Fighter members.
10. Placing a larger responsibility upon 4-H Club officers and adult sponsors responsible for getting the boys and girls to enroll. The neighborhood local leadership system was useful and helpful.
11. Cooperation and interest of rural school teachers helped to increase the participation of boys and girls in 4-H Club work.
12. Leaders endeavored to show that one could realize a very definite reward and at the same time contribute one's rightful share in patriotism to the war effort of the Nation by producing certain crops and livestock for the war effort.
13. The idea of getting well paid for produce needed in the war effort had its bearing upon individuals who found interest and duty aligned with the Feed-a-Fighter program. The appeal for Feed-a-Fighter members was heard, and a pleasing response to the call was shown by the increased number of 4-H Club members over and above all previous years - a total of 28,976.
14. 4-H mobilization campaigns.
15. Improve 4-H Club program.
16. Setting up preliminary enrollment goals for each county based on the club-age population.
17. Use of neighborhood leaders in enrolling out-of-school boys and girls.
18. We put on an enrollment campaign among the club officers and members promising to give a free scholarship to the State 4-H Club short course to the county council president whose county enrolled the largest number of women and girls in club work. The girls obtained the assistance of the home demonstration club members in helping to enroll women in home demonstration clubs and young people in the 4-H Clubs. The girls were enthusiastic, with the result that two counties tied and we had to give free scholarships to two county council presidents.
19. Appeal to patriotism for enlisting in club work for some wartime project, such as collecting salvage, or purchasing war stamps and war bonds. Help feed a fighting man by growing a Victory garden or raising more pigs and poultry.
20. Through a better understanding of 4-H work on the part of parents.
21. Getting cooperation of rural teachers and county school superintendents.
22. Having local leaders more clearly understand their responsibility in relation to 4-H work.
23. The profit motive in 4-H projects by use of extension outlook for high prices.
24. Encouragement in competition at fairs, shows, camps, other educational and recreational activities.
25. Well-trained leaders, including older club member.
26. Special 4-H Club projects.
27. Prizes offered, including war bonds and stamps.

28. Moving-picture shows.
29. The use of neighborhood 4-H Club leaders and the placing of club work on part school and neighborhood basis.
30. A larger coverage of the county by Negro agents.
31. The awarding of Victory Certificates of Achievement in club work.
32. The most effective way this situation was handled in some parishes was to enroll these boys and girls who had to be out of school and follow them up and keep them informed as to the requirements and progress of the 4-H Club program. As far as possible, meetings were held at the convenience of the out-of-school 4-H Club members. The officers and leaders were advised to keep these 4-H Club members on the list and give them all the information and literature given other 4-H Club members.
33. Joint meetings of 4-H and adult clubs.
34. Vary program to include "community pride" projects.
35. Conduct a membership rally.
36. Patriotic appeal to the people on the needs of war.
37. Increased the number of clubs from one to three to an agent.
38. Added projects of interest to program such as home management and swine for girls.
39. Increased contests and exhibits.
40. Organized older youths.
41. Increased 4-H Club leaders.
42. Interest in home demonstration clubs and farm demonstration councils in having a good 4-H Club in each neighborhood.
43. Obtain the support and cooperation of the parents, school teachers, and ministers in promoting 4-H Club work.
44. The development and advertisement of good result demonstrations.
45. Our difficult problems still face us in 1944. We believe, however, that effective local leadership was probably the most important factor in increasing the 4-H Club enrollment.